

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 John 5:20
Lesson #24
Knowing God
06/19/2022



“The idea of god was nothing more than a symbolic representation of the collective values of the society that worships (itself through) him, she, or it.”



Emile Durkheim 1858-1917

A Church’s culture will tell us a lot about how it sees God.

The way it views God is shaped in part by how it views -

- 2 Biblical covenants.
- Jesus.

Church cultures

HOLINESS

emphasis on purity of doctrine and deportment.



control law & order

LOVE

emphasis on grace and openness.



freedom tolerance

Christian communities tend to reflect one of two emphases.

“There is perhaps no part of divinity attended with so much intricacy, and wherein orthodox divines do so much differ as stating the precise agreement and difference between the two dispensations of Moses and Christ.”



Memoirs of Jonathan Edwards p 463

“The similarities and differences between the Old & New Testament’s teaching has been and remains greatly debated among devout Christian.”



Paraphrase

Contrasting worlds

Old Testament	New Testament
HOPE centered in this life	HOPE centered in next life
Deut. 28:1-14 is typical of the O.T. positive correlation between obedience and material / temporal prosperity and power.	
<i>Deuteronomy 28:2</i>	
“All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God:”	

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Contrasting worlds

Old Testament	New Testament
HOPE centered in this life	HOPE centered in next life
ORTHOPRAXY (behavior centered)	ORTHODOXY (belief centered)
LAW emphasis	GRACE emphasis
UNION WITH GOD through Israel	UNION WITH GOD through faith in Christ
Ethics and LAWS	The Word of the CROSS

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It is hard to deny the difference between the N.C. and O.C. portraits of God.

John 1:17

“For the Law was given through Moses;

O.T.



grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.”

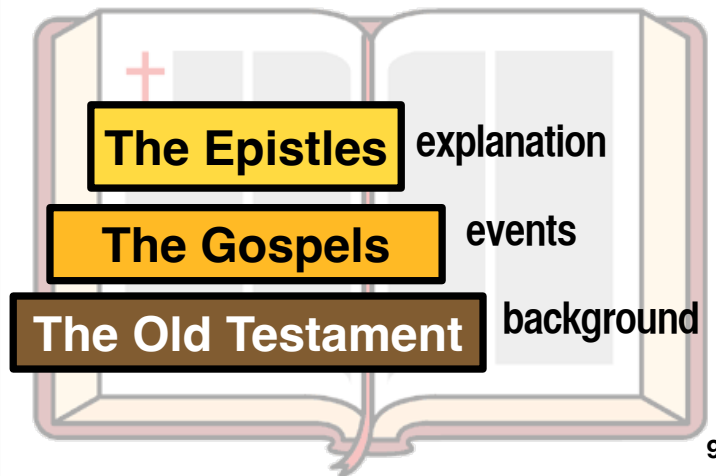
N.T.



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THE GOSPEL STORY



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God has not changed but the **what and the way** He reveals himself has changed.

All Scripture is written FOR us but not always TO us or ABOUT us.

Hebrews 8:13

“When He said, “A new covenant,” He has made the first **obsolete**.

But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to **disappear**.”

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Example

The **Sabbath and the 10 Commandments** are at the heart of the Old Testament’s picture of God.

Exodus 31:14

“Therefore you are to observe the sabbath, for it is holy to you. Everyone who profanes it **shall surely be put to death**; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people.”

Some other capital offenses under O.T. Law: (extramarital sex, homosexual acts, disobeying parents, bearing false witness, contempt of court, false prophecy, blasphemy, etc.)

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Hebrews 1

“¹ God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, ² in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. ³ And **He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature**, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”

The true nature and full glory of God are clarified in Jesus.

1 John 5

“²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, **in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true**, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

Paraphrase

“Knowing God comes through
1) seeing and understanding Jesus,
2) sharing & walking in His Spirit.”

Knowing God is centered in knowing Christ

John 1:18

“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has explained Him.**”

John 14

“⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? **He who has seen Me has seen the Father**; how do you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”

Knowing God is inseparable from walking with Jesus and keeping his commandment to love others.

1 John 2

“³ And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we **keep His commandments**. ⁴ The one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; ⁵ but whoever **keeps His word**, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: ⁶ the one who says he **abides in Him** ought himself to **walk in the same manner** as He walked.”

The Image of God from the O.C. emphasizes:

- ✓ **Sovereign Lord** - controlling and decreeing all that comes to pass
- ✓ **Separated Deity** - separated from the world in clear physical ways
- ✓ **Supreme King** - national ruler after the order of David
- ✓ **Strict Judge** - gives and takes away on the basis of merit.

But was not Jesus affirming the Law?

- ✓ He doubled down on its demands in Matt. 5-7
- ✓ He demanded obedience to it for disciples.
- ✓ Jesus’ sacrifice was the ultimate affirmation of the O.C. LAW.
- ✓ **BUT with Jesus’ crucifixion, the Law Covenant was fulfilled and terminated.**



Matthew 5:17

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but **to fulfill.**”

Galatians 4

“4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, **born under the Law**, 5 in order that He might **redeem those who were under the Law**,”

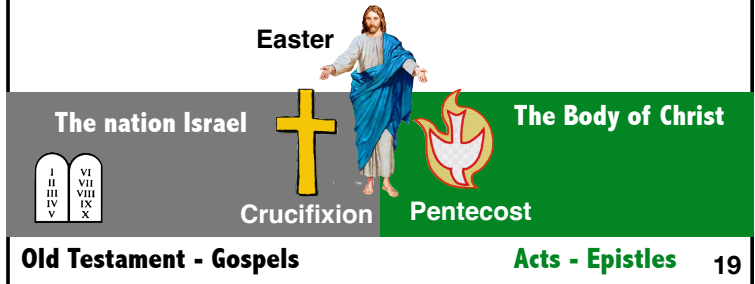
In Christ, God was not *pardoning* sinners, by *overlooking their just condemnation*, he *redeemed* sinners by *fulfilling the Law's demands* for atonement.

God did not abandon His holy nature with Christ. He punctuated it with an *exclamation mark at the cross*.

The New Covenant was understood to be a new beginning.

Acts 11:15

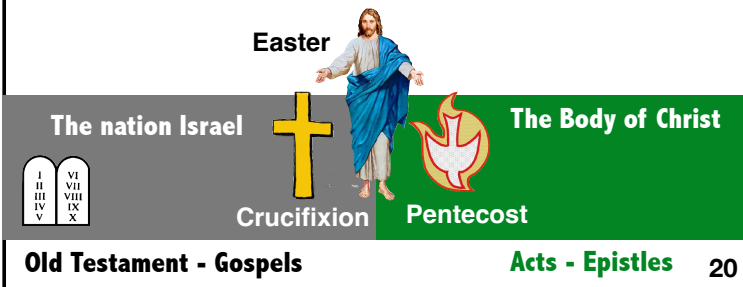
“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning**.”



This was a *mystery* until revealed to Paul.

Ephesians 3:3-5

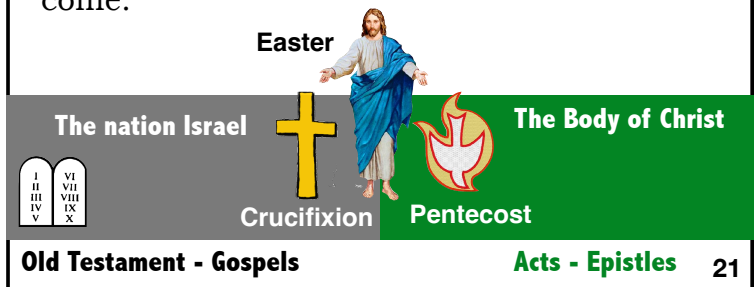
“that by revelation there was made known to me the **mystery**,...which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;”



The full meaning of this would come after Pentecost.

John 16:13

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, **He will guide you into all the truth**; . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”



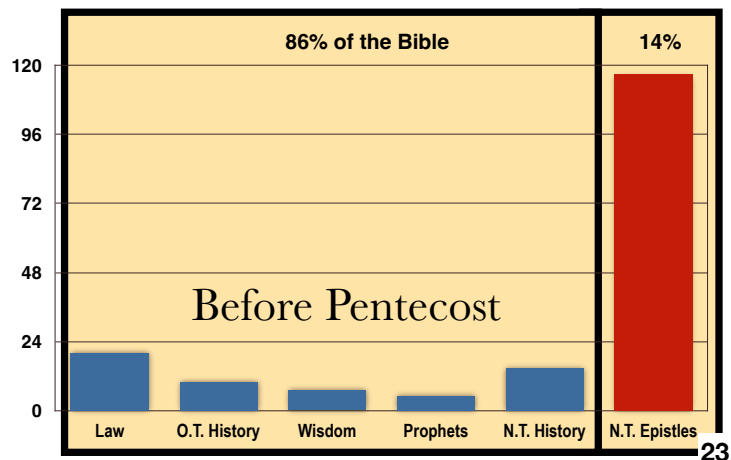
How did Jesus change the emphasis of God's image?

- ✓ **Sovereign** - “came to serve”
- ✓ **Separate** - “a friend of sinners”
- ✓ **Supreme** - “not of this world”
- ✓ **Strict** - “came to save”



What face do we see?

Distribution of references to the word “grace” in the various divisions of the Scripture



The emphasis of the Gospels

The space given to
the Passion and
Resurrection

The Advent



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The Passion and Resurrection
occupied a few hours at
the end of Jesus life.

Gospels

birth, teaching, miracles, deeds of Jesus

but were the
obsession of
the Epistles

Epistles

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What should catch our attention?

- ✓ Knowing God is **wrapped up in seeing the uniqueness of Jesus' image of God.**
- ✓ Jesus exemplified the **Word and Way of the Cross throughout his life and in his death.**
- ✓ Jesus **emphasized** certain attributes of God and **not** others. Take note!



- Who he hung out with!
- Who he pushed back on!
- What he made a mockery of!
- What he experienced and how he responded!

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John 1

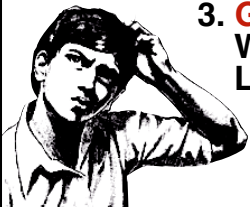
“ 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God.** . . . 4 In Him was life, and **the life was the Light of mankind.** 5 And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it. . . . 9 *There* was the true Light that, coming into the world, **enlightens every person.**”

Jesus not only shows us God, but also shows us something of what it means to be human, bearing His Image.

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What did Jesus reveal to us about God and ourselves?

1. **Relationship** - Humans are made for fellowship with God as with one another.
2. **Dignity** - Humans are made in God's image and can embody God's Spirit.
3. **Grace & Truth** - The Word & Way of the Cross displace Law & Mystery.
4. **Love** - displaces Fear



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Be careful - some paths to knowing God can be misleading.

- **Knowledge** - Knowing Biblical facts about God can be dry, superficial, & academic.
- **Feelings** - Emotional experiences can come from many sources and **distract** us from reality.
- **Transactions** - Answers to prayer, material blessings, etc. can focus our **attention** on this world and this life.
- **Covenant context** - The O.C. is **for** us but not **to** us or **about** us.

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A path that has turned many away from God may be the most common path to knowing Him.

- **Suffering & Shame** - Jesus came looking for sinners not saints, for wounded, poor, & weak not the gifted, rich, & strong.

Philippians 3

“10 that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and **the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death**; 11 if somehow I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

- He meets us at his cross **and ours.**

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The commemoration of his death is a central part of our worship.

1 Corinthians 10:16

“Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ.”



1 Corinthians 11:26

“For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you **proclaim the Lord’s death** until he comes.”

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Romans 16

“25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to **my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ**, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been **kept secret for long ages past**, 26 **but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets**, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, **leading to obedience of faith**; 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.”

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1 John



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The screenshot shows the APTTOTEACH website with a dark red theme. At the top, the logo features an open book and the text "APT TOTEACH" with the tagline "A bishop then must be ... apt to teach 1 Timothy 3:2". Below the logo is a navigation menu with "HOME", "BIBLE INSIGHTS", "HARD QUESTIONS", "HOT TOPICS", and "THEOLOGY". A search bar is visible with the text "Google Search" and "Apttoteach.org". A yellow arrow labeled "Search" points to the search bar, and another yellow arrow labeled "Check" points to the search results area. A green arrow labeled "past lessons" points to a "Pop" section on the left. A green arrow labeled "press to play" points to "LISTEN" and "WATCH" icons at the bottom right. The page number "25" is in the bottom right corner.